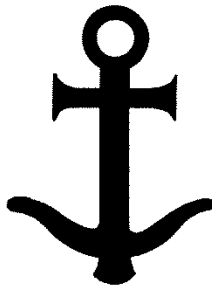


The Third Sunday in Advent
December 13, 2015



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America
Dr. Ron Gonzales, Minister
Office: 5 W Alder St, Ste 237 Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 522-1020 E-mail: office@covenantwallawalla.org

*Upon entering the sanctuary please maintain silence for
the sake of the congregation's preparation for worship, and please make
sure all electronic devices are turned off or set to silent mode.*

-DRAWING NEAR TO GOD-

Welcome and Silent Prayer

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

O Lord, as we worship today,

help us to prepare to welcome your dramatic work in our midst,
in our hearts, in our community, and in all of creation.

Help us to worship you.

—based on Isaiah 40.3

***Call to Worship**

Luke 2.8-15

***Prayer of Adoration**

***Song of Advent**

Hymn No. 208

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-

Confession of Sin

Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep,
we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts,
we have offended against your holy laws,
and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done.
O Lord, have mercy on us;
spare those who confess their faults;
restore those who are penitent,
according to your promises declared to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord;
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may live a godly, righteous and sober life,
to the glory of your holy Name. Amen.

—From *The Book of Common Prayer*

Silently Add Your Own Confession of Sin

Assurance of Pardon

Jeremiah 33.14-16

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle:

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 53.2-5

New Testament Reading

Hebrews 2.14-15, 17

***Song of Praise to Christ**

Hymn No. 194

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

Prayer for the Church and the World

-ATTENDING TO THE WORD-

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 58.1-59.13

Sermon

“Pure and Undeified Religion”

Rev. Ron Gonzales

***Song of Response**

Hymn No. 157

NONE OTHER LAMB, NONE OTHER NAME

Worship of God with Tithes and Offering

**DOXOLOGY*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

words Thomas Ken, 1709; music Genevan Psalter, 1551; Public Domain

Confession of Faith

What do you believe concerning Christ the Mediator?

It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus,

His only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man;

the Prophet, Priest, and King; the Head and Savior of His Church;

the Heir of all things; and the Judge of the world:

to whom He did from all eternity give a people, to be His seed,

and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

—The Westminster Confession of Faith, 8.1

-OBSERVING THE SACRAMENT-

The Lord's Supper

We celebrate the Lord's Supper by coming forward (generally from the back of the sanctuary to the front, though you may commune at any time) and partaking of the bread and the cup. Wine is served in the inner ring of each tray; grape juice in the outer ring. We warmly invite to the Table all baptized Christians, who are living under the authority of Christ and his Church. By eating the bread and drinking of the cup, you are admitting that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Christ alone for salvation. If this does not describe you, we are glad you are here and commend to you the following prayers for your use during this time.

A Prayer for those Searching for the Truth

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life you promise. Amen.

A Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need and may turn from every false pleasure to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

***Song of Thanksgiving**

Hymn No. 211

GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN

-GOING FORTH TO SERVE-

***Benediction**

2 Corinthians 13.14

Postlude and Silent Prayer

Grant, O Lord, that the words we have heard this day,
may, through your grace, be so grafted into our hearts,
that they bring forth in us faith, hope, and especially love,
to the honor and praise of your Name;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*Please stand if able

Our Nursery Helpers

Worship

Today: Katie Leinweber & Annie Carpenter

Next Week: Anna Vander Griend & Abi Carpenter

Sermon Notes: “Pure and Undefined Religion” (Isaiah 58.1-59.13)

1. Hypocritical devotion: fasting to no avail (58.1-5)
2. Authentic spirituality and the favor of God (58.6-14)
3. God’s remedy for our failure (59.1-13)

Prayer Concerns

Tom & Melissa Manning: It is getting quite cold in Jordan. The Mannings have spent much of the past month visiting and ministering to Syrian refugees, many of whom are living in shelters with tin roofs and concrete floors. Pray for their safety and health, and that many might sense through Tom and Melissa the warmth of Christ's love and the grace of the gospel.

Announcements

Birthdays this Week:

December 19 Roberta Haer

Christmas Caroling & Hayride: Please join us Sunday, December 20, at 4:00 PM, at the church. We will carol from a horse-drawn covered wagon, then return to the church for drinks and Christmas treats. The church will provide beverages and families should bring snacks to share, finger foods, etc. RSVP to Eric Carpenter by today.

Christmas Eve Service: Please join us Christmas Eve, as we gather with Central Christian and Journey Church for a one-hour Service of Lessons and Carols. The service time will be determined very soon.

RUF Boise State: Brian and Gail Frey are expecting to end the year with a significant shortfall. If you would like to join us in helping them, please drop a check in the offering by today, made payable to Covenant, with "RUF Boise State" on the memo line.

Session Meeting: The elders are meeting this Wednesday, at 6:30 PM, at Pastor Ron's office, to pray for and conduct the business of the church. Please pray for them as they do, and be sure to let them know how they can pray for you.

Sunday School is on break in December. It will resume in January.

Visitors: Welcome to Covenant! We are glad you are here and invite you to join us downstairs, following the service, for refreshments and fellowship.

Weekly Gatherings

The Leinweber's Home Fellowship Group meets at their home on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Dinner is provided, children are welcome, and the group is a lot of fun!

The Men's Group meets Thursdays, from 6:00 to 7:30 AM, at Pastor Ron's office, for fellowship, prayer, and Bible study. The men are currently studying Genesis, and all are invited.

Explanation of Cover Symbol

The anchor is an ancient Christian symbol for hope. It is derived from Hebrews 6.19: "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul..." When combined with a cross it makes plain that Christian hope is in Christ and His redemption. The symbol was frequently used in this sense in the catacombs of ancient Rome.